

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS ANKARA 002372

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: IZ PGOV PREL TU

SUBJECT: APRIL 11 TURKISH GOVT STATEMENTS ON IRAQ

¶1. Anatolia News Agency reported that a written press announcement issued by the Prime Ministry April 11 stated that GOT military and civilian leaders discussed developments in Iraq at the meeting held at the Prime Ministry this morning. The situation in Kirkuk and Mosul was high on the agenda. According to Anatolian News Agency the statement's highlights are as follows:

-- "Upon attempts by local powers (note: the Kurds. End note) to take control of Kirkuk yesterday -- and despite understandings and agreements reached so far -- (we) have contacted civilian and military elements of the U.S. administration. During these contacts Turkey's concerns regarding the region and particularly with the above-mentioned cities (sic) were emphasized again, and the U.S. was asked to fulfill the assurances that it had given to us;"

-- "The U.S. side told us, as they had assured with us earlier, that our concerns were taken into consideration and that they will not allow any faits accompli to occur, (and) that U.S. forces are being transported to the region rapidly and that they will control the situation;"

-- "The U.S. side also proposed (the establishment of) liaison teams of Turkish Armed Forces to join the U.S. forces to be deployed in the region and to observe the situation on the spot."

-- The announcement also noted that Turkey has accepted the offer and that liaison teams will reach their areas of deployment around 16:00 hrs (Ankara) April 11. It also stated that developments will be followed in light of the information provided by these teams.

-- Moreover, "as a result of our initiatives, the local armed forces which had entered Kirkuk have begun to withdraw. The same demand was conveyed to the U.S. regarding Mosul. Our intensive contacts with U.S. officials continue."

-- Turkey's humanitarian assistance to Iraq was also on the meeting agenda: "Our efforts, which will be important for the Iraqi people, are continuing in coordination with UN organizations as well as bilaterally. Within this framework, more than 500 truckloads of medicine and food have crossed the Turkish border into northern Iraq."

-- The announcement stated that the security situation in the region was also discussed. Preparedness levels and fortification plans for Turkish Armed Forces units along the border, "in adjacent regions" in southeastern Turkey and in northern Iraq were reviewed.

¶2. Independent NTV reported that 3 liaison teams totalling 15 members -- five each in Mosul, Kirkuk, and at General Osman's Headquarters -- will serve in northern Iraq together with the U.S. units.

¶3. Earlier, Deputy PM/FM Abdullah Gul announced that the GOT summit was chaired by PM Erdogan. Participants included TGS Chief General Ozkok, Deputy PM Mehmet Ali Sahin, FM Gul, Defense Minister Gonul, MIT U/S Atasagun, and MFA U/S Ziyal. Gul stated that Turkish civilian and military officials have been in and continue to be in contact with their USG counterparts regarding the situation in Kirkuk and Mosul. "I've spoken to the Secretary of State (Powell) and the TGS Chief talked to his counterpart. We reminded them of their guarantees. They said that those assurances are still valid." In response to a question, Gul stressed that "the important thing for Turkey is not to allow any faits accompli." Gul also announced that he postponed his trip to Damascus and ruled out speculation that the U.S. made a recommendation in that regard.

PEARSON